



SCHOOLS ONLINE

# Global Connections and Exchange

## Tajikistan

September 2006

Each month, we will publish a newsletter like this one to update other schools in our network, our donors and other interested readers about the activities and progress taking place within our program in Tajikistan.

Do you have something you would like to add to the newsletter?  
Please contact:  
[tajiked@ri.org](mailto:tajiked@ri.org)

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## Connecting through Online Projects, Libraries and Exchange

September was an exciting month for RI-SOL's program in Tajikistan with the establishment of two new libraries in secondary schools supported by GCEP. The libraries opened with the start of the new school year, during which RI-SOL also participated in a number of traditional Tajikistani events. Several GCEP students and teachers were also selected to participate in the upcoming Youth Leadership Program on Free Expression. In addition, the online forum provided the opportunity for youth in Tajikistan to discover what it is like to be a student around the world by working on collaborative projects with students in other countries.



*Students browse through the new selection of books provided to libraries at two GCEP schools.*

The Global Connections and Exchange for Tajikistan project has established 24 Internet Learning Centers (ILCs) in secondary schools across Tajikistan. The program's main goal is to increase global dialogue and educational opportunities by installing modern computer equipment with Internet access in schools, as well as developing training and learning projects for teachers and students.

[www.connect-tajikistan.org](http://www.connect-tajikistan.org)

# Technology and Literature Combine

## Libraries at ILC schools filled with new books

Libraries are an integral part of every school. Books provide a wealth of knowledge for schoolchildren as well as develop critical reading skills. Unfortunately, due to a lack of resources and various other problems, the condition of libraries in secondary schools is extremely poor. During last four years the Tajikistan government has made great strides towards improving libraries in schools throughout the country with the generous support of donors. However, libraries are still inadequate and are deficient in literature and textbooks for students and teachers.

This academic year brought pleasant surprises for two of our Internet Learning Centers (ILCs) at schools in the cities of Sarband and Hisor. The schools were provided with different books to be used by both students and teachers.

U.S. students and teachers voluntarily collected interesting fiction books as a gift to their Tajikistan friends: novels, science fiction, historical fiction, classics and many other types of literature. The books had been shipped to Tajikistan through the U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan and were presented in May 2006. In addition, Relief International – Schools Online has purchased literature and textbooks written in Tajik, Russian, and English to further enhance the collection.

On September 2nd and 4th, RI-SOL made an official handover of the books for the two libraries, marking unforgettable days in the lives of those at the schools in Hisor and Sarband. In addition, RI-SOL had a meeting with

schoolchildren, teachers, school administration and representatives from the local government - Hukumat - who expressed their gratitude for such a kind and enormous contribution.

To make the libraries both convenient and appealing, the rooms were also equipped with necessary items such as tables, desks, chairs, shelves and heaters. Students and teachers from diverse social and economic backgrounds will now have the same access to interesting and necessary books. We hope that every reader will benefit from the libraries and will find their knowledge base

greatly enriched.



*Students discover the wonder of books with help from RI-SOL staff.*



# The First Bell

The 1st of September marked the first day of study for all educational institutions in Tajikistan and many other countries. Starting off the new academic year for all secondary schools in Tajikistan is the official ceremony called "The First Bell." All students, parents and teachers participate in the festive ceremony during which the 11th grade students congratulate and welcome the newest school entrants – the 1st grade pupils – to their new life and express their hopes that the students will gain the knowledge and skills that will be necessary for them during their life.

On the eve of September 1st, every school conducts a "Day of Open Doors." This is a day when schoolchildren and their parents are invited to learn about recent



*Students participating in a rally during events marking the start of the school year.*

news and future possibilities for their schools. The doors of Internet Learning Centers (ILCs) were also open for everyone who wished to learn about the ILCs of Tajikistan and

our current programs – Global Connections and Exchange Program and Youth Leadership Program on Free Expression. ILC Managers together with project group students, club members and volunteers conducted informative presentations about Global Connections and Exchange Program (GCEP), its activities and opportunities for students, teachers and community members, and invited new students to become participants of GCEP.

With the start of the new year also came the start of new project groups that have monthly partnership activities with U.S. schools. The groups include English Clubs, Web Designers and Programmers Clubs, Art and Photography Clubs, Youth Leadership Clubs and Youth Journalists Clubs.

## Meeting with David Fay

Mr. David Fay, a Regional English Language Officer based in Tashkent and a guest of the U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan, visited our country in the middle of September to conduct research for English language training. The training is scheduled for the summer of 2007 and will help develop English language teaching skills for teachers of secondary schools in Tajikistan. Last year, Mr. Fay visited Tajikistan and met with ILC Managers and teachers of School No.1 in Sarband and Lyceum No.1 in Kulob – both schools that are participants of the English Language Programs Office of the U.S. Department of State "E-Teacher" Program. This time around, he made a trip to the

Sughd region and met with Isfara ILC Manager, Ibrohim Rustamov and English language teachers from different schools of the city and its remote villages. During the meeting, Mr. Fay discussed with teachers the many different issues with teaching the English language, such as a lack of textbooks and professional development courses. Michelle Barrington, the U.S. Embassy English Language Fellow who is currently working in the Department of Foreign Languages at Khujand State University also joined the meeting and expressed a desire to visit our ILCs on



*David Fay meets with RI-SOL staff, ILC managers and GCEP teachers.*

a regular basis to conduct professional development trainings for teachers. In Dushanbe, Mr. David Fay met with a group of teachers and ILC Managers from Sarband and Dushanbe School No. 8 for the deaf, Zebo Murodova and Kimat Giyoeva.

# Preparing for YFE 2006

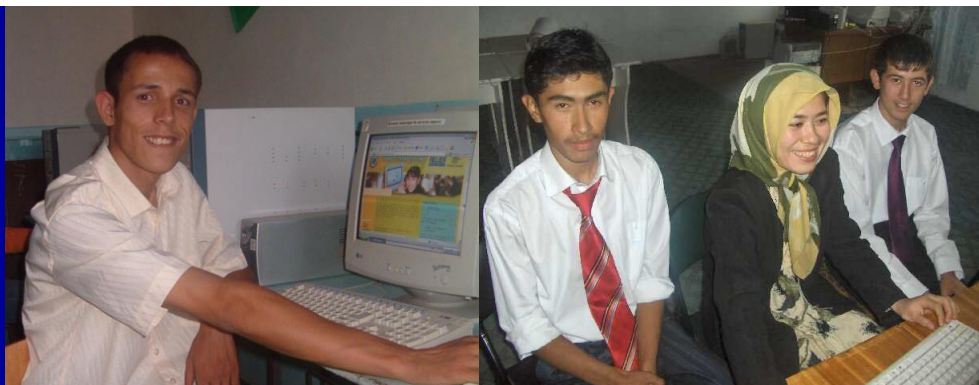
Congratulations to the Tajikistan winners of YFE! The following seven students and two teachers will participate in our first exchange program:

## Students:

**Behruzjon Sitamov**  
from Vose  
**Dzhovid Kamolov**  
from Kurgan-Tyube  
**Matlyuba Rakhimova**  
from Sarband  
**Farzona Abduqayumova**  
from Kulob  
**Ilkhom Babadzanov**  
from Konibodom  
**Umedjon Abdushukurzoda**  
from Isfara  
**Iskandarkhon Isroilzoda**  
from Isfara

## Teachers:

**Nabuvat Oripova**  
from Isfara  
**Shoira Sharipova**  
from Kayrokkum



*A few of the students  
who will be participating in this fall's YFE exchange.*

During the month of August, RI-SOL of Tajikistan and our counterparts in Jordan and Azerbaijan were busy with the selection process of candidates for the Youth Leadership Program on Free Expression (YFE). The recruitment committee in Tajikistan consisted of Mr. Jon Larsen, U.S. Public Affairs Officer of the U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan; Mrs. Cindy McCann, a teacher from Washington state, USA; and Daniel Stanley, Program Officer of American Councils for International Education. The selection process was highly competitive with a number of excellent candidates. On September 1st, coinciding with the first day of study for our students, the selected exchange participants were officially announced. The students and teachers will travel to the United States at the end of October and stay for one month, visiting Washington DC, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Sacramento. During the exchange, youth and youth educators from Tajikistan, Azerbaijan and Jordan will engage in a month-long intensive program filled with workshops, seminars, and community service projects aimed at empowering participants to make a positive change in their societies. Through the engagement of participants with government officials, civil society organizations and schools, the program illustrates the value of the freedom of expression and the freedom of the press in American society while teaching participants the skills that they can use to directly promote democratic principles in their society. Youth from both groups will have an opportunity to learn about young people's engagement in civil society in other countries. A student forum will provide students with the opportunity to reflect on their newly acquired knowledge and determine ways to turn ideas into action in their own countries.

A second exchange is planned for January and February of 2007. The selection process for exchange participants will begin in November.

We wish good luck to the first exchange participants and say "Welcome!" to new students and teachers who wish to apply for this program. Do not lose your chance to be part of such an amazing opportunity!

# Student Focus

GCEP's first lesson of the school year focused on introducing students in Tajikistan to their US counterparts.

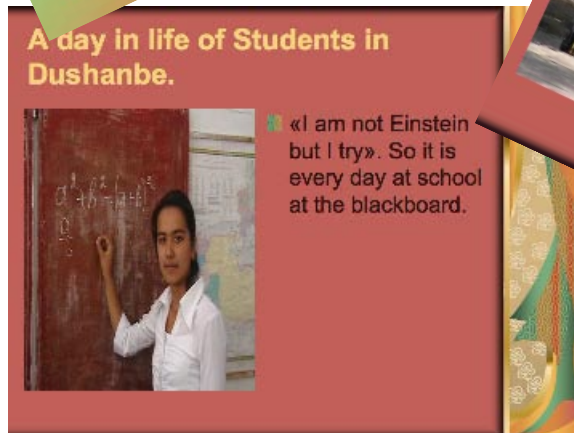
The objective of this lesson was for students to explore and describe their home, lifestyles, and culture for their partner schools and to understand the daily realities of life in another country.

Using a mixture of photos and text, student teams from each school prepared presentations in PowerPoint (or a document in Microsoft Word) describing a typical day in their lives.

Questions such as:

**What do you do in a typical day? When do you get up and go to bed? What do you eat and when? Who are your friends and family? What do they wear? What movies and television shows do you watch? What hobbies and sports do you do after school?**

were answered by students. Below are several examples of PowerPoint slides created by GCEP students in Tajikistan.



The Global Connections and Exchange Project - Tajikistan is a project of Relief International - Schools Online's Global Citizenship and Youth Philanthropy Program and has been made possible with major funding from the Bureau for Education and Cultural Affairs of the US Department of State, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Microsoft Community Foundation and the Global Catalyst Foundation.

For more information about our programs please visit  
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